

Documents on Diplomacy: The Source

The True Division Becomes Perceptible *A Letter from Charles Francis Adams to Charles Francis Adams Jr.* *Mount Felix, Walton-on-Thames, December 25, 1862*

Public matters remain yet in a profound state of repose, and probably will continue for another month. The publication made by the Secretary of State of large portions of my Despatches for the past year has rather stirred a hornet's nest in the press but I fancy it will prove only a nine days' wonder. I have said merely what everybody knows. The great body of the aristocracy and the wealthy commercial classes are anxious to see the United States go to pieces. On the other hand the middle and lower classes sympathise with us, more and more as they better comprehend the true nature of the struggle. . . . The true division now begins to make itself perceptible here as elsewhere in Europe—the party of the old and of the new, of vested rights and of well regulated freedom. All equally see in the convulsion in America an era in the history of the world, out of which must come in the end a general recognition of the right of mankind to produce of their labor and the pursuit of happiness. Across all these considerations come occasionally individual and national interests which pervert the judgment for a time, but the world moves onward taking little note of temporary perturbations, and whatever may betide to us of this generation, and the end is sure. . . .

Source

Ford, Worthington Chauncey, ed. *A Cycle of Adams Letters, 1861-1865*, in two volumes. [Boston: 1920]